

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/811,953

Examiner

Julian W. Woo

Applicant(s)

CHAN, KWAN-HO

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment and terminal disclaimers of 2/10/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 2, 12 and 13.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 2/21/06
- ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
- ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
- ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
- ☐ Other _____

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

2. The application has been amended as follows:

In the specification, page 1, first paragraph:

After "07/07/98," insert -- , now abandoned, --.

After "10/08/96," insert -- , now U.S. Patent No. 5,776,151,--.

After "04/28/94," insert -- , now U.S. Patent No. 5,582,683,--.

After "07/12/93," insert -- , now U.S. Patent No. 5,562,687,--.

In claim 3, line 4, delete "potion" and in its place, insert --portion--.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The terminal disclaimers filed on February 10, 2006 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration dates of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,562,683 and 5,776,151 have been reviewed and are accepted. The terminal disclaimers have been recorded and overcome the double-patenting rejections in the Office action of August 8, 2005. Moreover, none of the prior art of record, alone or in combination, discloses a suture passer including, inter alia, a hollow cannula, a handle adapted to engage the hollow cannula and having distal and proximal ends and




an intermediate portion, a first suture guide means formed by a first body portion of the handle and having a channel therethrough, and a second suture guide means formed by a second body portion of the handle and having a channel therethrough, where the intermediate portion has an exposed surface disposed between the first and second body portions.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Julian W. Woo whose telephone number is 571-272-4707. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 6:30-4:00, Alt. Fri. OFF, 6:30-3:00 Fri. IN.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anh Tuan Nguyen can be reached on 571-272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Julian W. Woo
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3731

April 18, 2006